UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1996/835
8 October 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 8 OCTOBER 1996 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF GEORGIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Allow me, first, to congratulate you on assuming the functions of President of the Security Council for this month. I am convinced that your skilful guidance of its deliberations will ensure the productive and successful work of this important body of the family of nations.

I would also like to once again repeat myself and extend my Government's sincere gratitude to the United Nations, its Security Council and particularly to the group of countries known as the Friends of Georgia, for their continued dedication to the cause of restoring lasting peace in my country.

The systematic and persistent efforts of the international community aimed at reaching a comprehensive settlement of the conflict in Abkhazia, Georgia, still runs up against the intransigence of the Abkhaz leadership, which fails to consider compromise a moral category.

In all its previous resolutions, and particularly in its resolution 1065 (1996) of 12 July 1996, the Security Council has demanded "that the Abkhaz side accelerate significantly the process of voluntary return of refugees and displaced persons without delay or preconditions". It has also affirmed "the unacceptability of the demographic changes resulting from the conflict".

In response to this call of the world community, the separatist leadership not only showed utter disregard for the decisions of the Security Council, but exacerbated the situation even more so by scheduling the presidential and parliamentary elections to be held in Abkhazia, Georgia, by November 1996.

We strongly believe that under present circumstances, when Abkhazia is left uninhibited by Georgians, when more than 300,000 refugees and displaced persons remain homeless, disenfranchised and humiliated, and in the face of the present demographic conditions, this decision is not only unlawful but also immoral, capable of damaging the peace process beyond repair.

We also have serious grounds to predict consequences far worse than just a stall in the peace process. The scheduled elections may irrevocably shatter the hope for the negotiated settlement of the dispute and spur the population on to uncontrollable actions. The resumption of hostilities will certainly set in motion a fateful process not only in Abkhazia, Georgia, but in the entire region of the Caucasus.

We believe that at a time of the Secretary-General's pending interim report on Georgia, the international community should unequivocally denounce this adventurist step of the Abkhaz authorities and take serious measures to prevent another conflagration in Georgia.

The Security Council has always been committed to Georgia's territorial integrity and has more than once affirmed this commitment by word and deed. We are confident that the world Organization will adequately react to the provocative actions of the separatists and will reflect its resolve in relevant documents of the United Nations.

I would be most grateful if you would have the text of the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Dr. Peter Chkheidze
Ambassador
Permanent Representative